

2013 Success Story

Deborah Strohm, Employment Technician



Statistics:

- **Who:** Deb Strohm
- **What:** Quit Smoking
- **When:** July 1st, 2013
- **Why:** For her Grandchildren

Employment Technician, Deb Strohm's last day of smoking was June 30th. She planned to quit for a month after her doctor advised her that cigarette smoke embedded in her clothes and hair were harmful to her grandchildren.

Deb quit in the summer; cigarettes did not taste as good to her when it was hot. In the beginning, she went to non-smoking places like her grandchildren's house, restaurants, and stores. She didn't trust herself to go home at times. Deb changed other behaviors, too. She drove her truck instead of her car, as she was not as familiar with it so it seemed like a new surrounding. Deb learned new crochet stitches, she eats meals at designated times, and drinks a glass of water whenever she starts to fidget.

Deb's biggest source of support came from a friend who quit many years ago and made himself available by phone 24/7 and even said he'd drive to her if needed. Deb's entire family has also been supportive. Her husband, a fellow smoker, adjusted his behavior by not smoking around or in front of Deb. Deb's cousin who lives more than 400 miles away also provided a great amount of moral support by telephone and text. Deb's cousin quit on November 1st, as well.

If someone told Deb they were going to quit smoking, she would encourage them to be serious, determined, and honest. She'd recommend educating yourself and finding someone who can help you stay focused. Deb would also recommend staying busy and finding new, healthy things to do. She'd want people to know that cravings happen and that it's easy to start again.

Nine months after quitting, Deb is still smoke-free! She doesn't think she'll smoke again as "it really does stink!" "I have too many reasons not to smoke," she said. Deb has saved money; "it just keeps adding up and I don't know what I'm going to do yet for my big reward," although she's treated herself to several little things along the way. Another reward Deb enjoys is hearing her grandson or granddaughter tell people, "My grandma doesn't smoke anymore!"

City of Duluth employees and their families on their health plan have access to the following resources:

- Get help with a HealthPartners health coach that will help set goals that fit your lifestyle. Sign up with a health coach at (952) 883-7800 or (800) 311-1052. This is a FREE resource.

Other resources include:

- LiveStrong MyQuit Coach mobile phone application
- Quit Smoking - Android application
- Quitter – iPhone application
- American Cancer Society guide to quit smoking:
<http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/guidetoquittingsmoking/index>
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